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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
JASON E. GLASS, DIRECTOR

June 21, 2011

Dr. Nancy Sebring, Superintendent
Des Moines Community School District
901 Walnut Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Dear Superintendent Sebring:

Attached is the report of findings for the Comprehensive School Improvement Site Visit conducted at Des Moines Independent Community School District (CSD) March 21 through March 25. The report is based upon a variety of interviews conducted with district staff and stakeholder groups during the indicated dates, and review of documents submitted to the Department and on-site. **The district's Equity report will be sent to the district within the next month.**

The site visit was designed to assess the district's progress with its Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP), provide a general assessment of educational practices within the district, make recommendations for improvement, and determine compliance with state accreditation standards and applicable federal program requirements.

Based on the findings from the comprehensive site visit, Des Moines Independent CSD maintains State of Iowa accreditation; however, non-compliance issues were identified. These issues are included in the Chapter 12 Non-compliance Matrix and the Outside of Chapter 12 Non-compliance Matrix contained in the site visit report. The district must resolve the identified issues through completion of corrective actions according to agreed upon timelines. Department follow-up will be conducted to verify resolution of the identified non-compliance issues.

The report reflects consensus of the following team members:

Department of Education Representatives:

Barb Byrd, School Improvement Consultant
Jim Doyle, Special Education Cadre
Dianne Chadwick, Assessment Consultant
Jim Donoghue, Medicaid Consultant
Wilma Gajdel, School Improvement Consultant
Dale Gruis, Career and Technical Education Consultant
Sharon Hawthorne, Part B Monitoring Consultant
Eric Neessen, Dispute Resolution Consultant
Gary Schwartz, School Construction Consultant
Susan Selby, Title I Consultant
Deb Squires Hindman, School In Need of Assistance Consultant
Jeanette Thomas, Career and Technical Education/Equity Consultant

Area Education Agency Representatives:

Tiffanie Almeida, Professional Learning and Leadership Consultant, Heartland AEA
Dustin Gean, Operations Manager, Heartland AEA
Connor Hood, Assessment Consultant, Heartland AEA
Ron Lorenz, Assistant Director of Special Education, Heartland AEA
Nikki Roorda, Partnership Director, Heartland AEA
Susen Schirmer, Professional Learning and Leadership Consultant, Heartland AEA

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Helping Communities Meet the Learning Needs of All Their Children and Adults

Barb Shutt, Curriculum Consultant – Reading, Heartland AEA
Kim Thuente, Assistant Director for Curriculum and Instruction, Heartland AEA

Local Education Agency Representatives:

Jill Anderson, Special Education Director, Norwalk CSD
Rodney Martinez, Elementary Principal, Norwalk CSD
Jean Peters, Director of Support Services, Sioux City CSD
Maria Ruelas, English as a Second Language Coordinator, Sioux City CSD
Mary Jo Salem, Director of Elementary Education, Sioux City CSD
Ross Wilburn, Equity Coordinator, Iowa City CSD

It is our hope this report will provide guidance to enhance student achievement in the district and support continuing conversations among staff and community members about the local education system, how and what students are learning, and how *more* students can learn at higher levels.

As part of Des Moines Independent CSD's continuous improvement process, the district must review its current CSIP and provide revisions as needed. Revisions should be based on the district's needs assessments (including the attached report), student achievement data, stakeholder input, and established priorities. Recertification of the CSIP must be completed by September 15th, 2011. Directions for revision and submission of the CSIP can be found at:
<https://www.edinfo.state.ia.us/securelogin.asp>.

The Department would appreciate the district's feedback regarding its site visit experience. This feedback will inform the Department's efforts to continuously improve the comprehensive site visit process. A short online survey has been developed and is available at the following site:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/W58H5LZ>. The survey will take approximately ten minutes to complete. Responses are confidential and shared in aggregate form with members of the Department's School Improvement Team.

The visiting team again extends its gratitude to you and the Des Moines Independent CSD staff and patrons in preparing for and showing courtesy during the visit. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,



School Improvement Consultant
Bureau of Accreditation and Improvement Services
Iowa Department of Education



Del Hoover, Deputy Administrator
Bureau of Accreditation and Improvement Services
Iowa Department of Education

cc: Site Visit Team Members
School Board President
Iowa Department of Education Official File
AEA Office

Comprehensive Site Visit Iowa Department of Education



Des Moines

Independent Community School District

Team Findings

March 21 – 25, 2011

Iowa Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
400 E. 14th St
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146

Vision, Mission, and Goals

In an improving district/school, the vision, mission, and goals are clearly communicated in the school and community. Stakeholders understand and share a commitment to the district/school expectations, goals, priorities, assessment procedures, and accountability. The vision guides allocations of time and resources. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Clearly articulated mission is established collaboratively with stakeholder groups representing the diversity of the community.
- Vision, mission, and goals are communicated throughout the system and community.
- The vision and mission of the district/school guide teaching and learning.
- Every five years, the comprehensive needs assessment process, with input from stakeholders, is used to review and revise the beliefs, mission, and/or vision; major educational needs; and student learning goals.
- Academic and academic-related data are analyzed and used to determine prioritized goals.
- Goals guide assessment of student achievement, district/school effectiveness, and the allocation of time and resources.
- The vision, mission, and goals support values of respecting and valuing diversity.

Noted Strengths:

1. School board members spoke of the pivotal change in district operations as a result of engaging in the study, training, and adoption of the district's governance model. Board members reported clarity and commitment in the board's role focusing on governance and the superintendent and leadership team focusing on the operations of the district to ensure students' academic and social/emotional development and well-being. The model is represented by a dynamic interaction of the board and district leadership with the community. Board members inquire and district leadership responds with data, information, and resources assisting the board in acquiring the capacity needed to make decisions. Board members reported seeking the input of school staff, parents, and the community as a priority in the decision-making process. The board and superintendent proactively engage stakeholders in conversations through public forums, surveys, and panel discussions.
2. Board members reported determining district progress through the development, review, and approval of a variety of scheduled monitoring reports throughout the year. Examples of some of the twelve scheduled monitoring reports included Financial Conditions and Activities, Treatment of Students/Public/Volunteers, Treatment of Faculty/Staff, Compensation and Benefits, Academic Achievement, and Asset Protection. Board members reported nothing is out of the question to ask for in the development of the reports, stating any data needed are provided. For example, district leadership brought forth student achievement data to determine progress for one of the monitoring areas. Board members considered the data presented and requested additional data to assist them in moving forward. This was described as a back-and-forth effort and useful in identifying trends in data. Based on data, the school board determines if monitoring reports will be approved.

Recommendations for Improvement:

3. Multiple interviewees reported the district's adoption of the school governance model and the development of district "ends" (i.e., student outcomes) through the incorporation of input from multiple stakeholder groups. District administrators, school board members, School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC) members, and others expressed commitment to enacting the district's ends; however, this commitment is not universally embraced, understood, articulated, or implemented at this time.

Conversations about district and building level change efforts have revealed inconsistency embedding and communicating these efforts into daily operational practices. Consider the following examples reported by interviewees:

- While some interviewees expressed commitment to the district implementing consistent, equitable, quality education in each attendance center, other interviewees reported choice options in the educational system resulted in inconsistent implementation of curriculum, as well as access to programs. For example, some interviewees questioned if International Baccalaureate (IB) is an exemplary educational model recognized as such around the world, why is it not implemented in all attendance centers? Parents reported significant difficulty in accessing information regarding choice options through the district web site or other means. For example, teachers and parents interviewed expressed a concern about how to access information about school choice and were confused about where information on these schools, as well as application materials, could be accessed. There was also a frustration with waiting lists and the inconsistent messages that were delivered to parents about the schools.
- Several interview groups commented on inconsistencies in practices from building to building throughout the district. While it is important to honor the culture and needs of each attendance center, it is also necessary to identify areas where all Regions and buildings must align for the benefit of students and families, in order to ensure consistency in practices and equitable educational programming for all students.
- A high mobility rate of students moving to multiple attendance centers in a school year or throughout the elementary, middle school, or high school levels was noted. It was also noted the transitions for students regarding curriculum, behavior expectations, and social/emotional supports can be noticeably disjointed.
- Other noted inconsistencies in attendance centers included, but were not limited to: varying implementation of behavior supports and programs, supports for students at-risk, gifted and talented (G/T), school counseling program, and student leadership development opportunities; varying implementation and use of data teams and school improvement leaders; district-wide professional development; varying levels of implementation of some curricular areas including music, art, physical education, and advanced placement (AP) courses; misalignment of high school credit courses taught in grades 9-12 with the same courses taught at some middle schools for high school credit; inconsistency of availability and access to after-school programs among attendance centers; inequity in technology allocations among attendance centers regarding hardware, software, professional development, and district/building technology support; inconsistent implementation of security measures such as locked doors and identification badges; inconsistent evaluation practices of instructional support staff; and inconsistent implementation of cell phone and acceptable use policies.

District administrators and school board members are encouraged to do the following:

- Intentionally plan for consistently communicating the district's mission and student end statements throughout the system. This must be the consistent message and practice beginning with central office leadership and building administrative teams. Begin this by engaging all stakeholder groups in continued conversations about the meaning of the district's mission, student end statements, and what observable teacher and student behaviors would be expected if the mission and end statements were fully enacted (implementation indicators).
 - Examine underlying assumptions about the district's mission and student end statements. Identify the non-negotiables and reach consensus on them.
 - Ensure the agreed upon non-negotiables are communicated clearly and regularly monitored through data collection and analysis.
- Use the mission and student end statements to leverage further change to positively impact student achievement. Reach agreement among district level administrators and building leadership teams about curriculum, professional development, programs, and supports that must be implemented with consistency throughout the PreK-12 system and those that may be implemented with some flexibility. Establish to what extent flexibility is acceptable. This includes the equitable allocation of resources district-wide to support core curriculum, professional development, and programs to ensure each and every student is successful and graduates. Establish consistent procedures and processes for monitoring implementation indicators, collect data, analyze data, conduct conversations about the data regularly, and communicate findings with all stakeholders.

With this knowledge of the educational inconsistencies and inequities in the district comes the obligation for the school board, district administrators, teachers, and SIAC to focus on the essentials each and every student deserves in curriculum, programs, and social/emotional supports. While choice in education options is well-intended, it should not be at the expense of ensuring a consistent, guaranteed, viable education for all students. High expectations and a challenging learning environment for each and every student are essential to achieve the district's mission and student end statements. Inconsistencies in the system were evidenced as significant barriers to student success in the district's last site visit report, 2006. All stakeholders must commit to high expectations and a challenging learning environment for each and every student without reservations. Please note the following statement numbers found in the remainder of this report related to this topic: 13, 14, 25, 26, 27, 29, 37, 38, 39, 40, 45, 46, 50, 58, and 61.

Leadership

In an improving district/school, leaders communicate a shared sense of purpose and understanding of the district/school's values. Leaders have a visible presence, provide resources and ensure two-way communication between the educational system and stakeholders. Leaders provide encouragement, recognition, and support for improving student learning and staff performance. Leadership is committed, persistent, proactive, and distributed throughout the system. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Policies and procedures are established to effectively support district/school operations.
- The school board and district/school administrators implement an evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel.
- Policies and practices are implemented to reduce and eliminate discrimination and harassment and to reflect, respect, and celebrate diversity.
- The role and responsibility of administrative leaders is supported, respected, and understood.
- A clearly defined system and expectations are established for the collection, analysis, and use of data regarding student achievement and progress with the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP).
- The capacity of staff, students, and parents to contribute and lead is built and supported.
- Opportunities for participation are provided for input, feedback, and ownership for student and system success among staff, students, parents, and community.
- Equity in access to learning opportunities and compliance with local, state, and federal legislation is ensured.
- Leaders at all levels understand and manage the change process.

Noted Strengths:

4. Some teachers expressed appreciation for the teacher evaluation process. For example, in some buildings, the principal uses an iPad to tailor classroom observation targets based on reflective conversations with the teacher about instructional practices. The principal uses the iPad to record data and provides prompt written feedback to the teacher. Teachers and principals reported the positive impact of engaging in professional, reflective conversations. Teachers in some locations reported evaluations were more meaningful because of the number and frequency of observations and walk-throughs they experienced. Some also commented observations and walk-throughs by multiple administrators enriched the process. Teachers said they appreciated the greater clarity of expectations with this process, and the results of walk-throughs were used to focus upcoming professional development and resources. Some teachers commented the evaluations are now more focused on teaching strategies. In some buildings, school improvement leaders reported working together to be more consistent with their observations and use of rubrics to enhance reliability.
5. District-level administrators reported they are working to provide differentiated supports for principals through monthly meetings for veteran administrators, monthly meetings for new administrators, Professional Learning Community (PLC) teams, and evaluations with 360 degree feedback. The intention is to proactively support leadership development for the purpose of removing barriers to accomplish the work that needs to be done to help students succeed.

6. Principals and students in some buildings reported a variety of leadership opportunities for students. Examples included Brother-to-Brother, Wolf Pack, SPIRIT committee, Ignite, peer mentoring, and student council.
7. Teachers in some buildings reported feeling supported and encouraged to take leadership roles. Some administrators find the staff's strengths and give them appropriate roles. They are encouraged to participate in curriculum development and lead professional development. Administrators were reported to encourage staff to become risk-takers and innovators.
8. Interviews with various groups at all levels, including Title I, demonstrated examples of the use of data to inform program decisions, professional development, classroom practices, and individual student interventions. Teachers and administrators reported using data walls and data teams to examine student data leading to differentiated instruction. District-level administrators noted issues with suspension disproportionality and are working to improve consistency in expectations, consequences, and interventions.
9. Interviewees in some buildings indicated there is an emerging leadership message of shared ownership and a commitment to build a community of "no excuses." Some principals stated they were helping staff build a common understanding of the need to do everything possible to ensure students succeed by using available resources and continually improving by becoming more data-driven. This was also evident in the expression of district "non-negotiables." Because of the district's graduation rate, the district is providing a stronger message about the need to have common instructional expectations across the district and a more systemic view. Some teachers reflected on the current district curriculum expectations by stating, "The 'what' is given through the curriculum guide. The 'how' is up to us."

Recommendations for Improvement:

10. Multiple interview groups including teachers, instructional support staff, learning support staff, and parents reported frustration with gaps and voids in communication across the district. Communication concerns included such things as how to access choice schools, how to help high school students prepare for post-secondary options, accessing support services, criteria for entrance into special programs, and processes and procedures for communicating with district level administration and board members. It is recommended the district develop a comprehensive communication plan to address the needs of the various stakeholders represented. Develop a plan incorporating attention to the following:
 - What specific information needs to be communicated? (topic and content)
 - With whom does the specific information need to be communicated? (specific group)
 - By when does the specific information need to be communicated? (timeline)
 - Through what means would this specific information best be communicated with this specific group of people? (multiple venues, e.g., e-mail, hardcopy, district web site and newsletter, local newspaper, radio, television, notes home, face-to-face, etc.)

Consistent use of a communication plan by the board, superintendent, district and building administrators, school committees, student groups, and others can improve communication with district stakeholders and improve relationships. Taking time to carefully consider the

above elements of a communication plan at incremental stages can assist the district in being intentional in its communications and ensure consistent messages are disseminated.

11. The district is encouraged to review the purpose and operations of its Career and Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Committees. Review of documents indicated these committees meet compliance; however, most of the members interviewed reported the site visit interview was the first meeting they had attended. While members were informative regarding business and industry trends, they were unaware of their role and responsibility as CTE Advisory members. Consider the following next steps:
 - Review CTE Advisory Committees' membership ensuring gender balance and race/ethnicity representation reflective of the community. For example, less than half of the student population is Caucasian, yet the majority of advisory representation is Caucasian. Document district efforts to recruit gender balance and race/ethnicity representation.
 - Establish operational procedures for the CTE Advisory Committees. Set the expectation for meeting agendas to be disseminated in advance of the meetings, for minutes to be shared with committee members promptly following meetings, and for minutes to be placed on the district web site.
 - Encourage non-school staff to take on advisory leadership roles.
 - Regularly review the role and responsibility of CTE Advisory Committee members: To assist with the planning and evaluation of the district's CTE programs. Establish meeting agendas incorporating these components of the advisories' responsibilities. Assist the CTE Advisories in understanding their role in making recommendations to the district's board of education. Monitor advisory members' progress in fulfilling their legislated role and responsibility.
 - Train CTE Advisory Committee members in data analysis and provide the committees with student achievement data, Perkins end-of-year report, and other relevant data. This information will assist committee members in fulfilling their role.
 - Consider contacting Tom Cooley (tom.cooley@iowa.gov), CTE Administrative Consultant, or Colleen Hunt (colleen.hunt@iowa.gov), CTE Bureau Chief, at the Iowa Department of Education for assistance.
12. Due to retirement, the position of equity coordinator is performed through the efforts of multiple staff. Because of the size of the district, this arrangement might be a productive change under certain circumstances; however, each person currently performing equity coordinator responsibilities needs to have the assigned responsibilities incorporated into a job description supported with appropriate training to fulfill the expectations of the job function. It would be beneficial to assign overall equity responsibility to an individual who would ensure an established procedure for monitoring equity job functions is implemented. A district equity coordinator can be proactive in ensuring the following:
 - Annually monitoring the district's website and annual publications to ensure they include accurate information about the district's non-discrimination and anti-bullying and harassment policies, the name and contact information for the equity coordinator, and information about the civil rights-related grievance procedure
 - Communicating annually to parents, students, and staff about their rights and responsibilities related to non-discrimination and harassment policies

- Monitoring student course enrollment and achievement trends by racial/ethnic background, gender, and disability, and facilitating periodic conversations with administrators, staff, SIAC, and board members regarding those trends
- Making an annual equity report with recommendations to the school board
- Facilitating periodic conversations with students and staff on ways the district might respect, reflect, and celebrate diversity
- Planning periodic professional development for staff, SIAC, and school board on diversity and equity-related issues

If the district chooses to continue having several individuals fulfill the equity coordinator role, ensure the people performing equity job functions are clearly and consistently identified and their contact information and roles are communicated to all staff, students, parents, and community. For example, district administrators and building principals offered varied understanding of who serves as the district's equity coordinator. It was explained that while one district administrator is noted as the district's equity coordinator in several publications, there are other individuals carrying out varying responsibilities of an equity coordinator. Consider accessing equity resources on the Iowa Department of Education web site for assistance:

http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=485&Itemid=1213.

13. Multiple interview groups reported the process of prioritizing needs and allocating resources from building to building is not clearly understood by many students, teachers, administrators, and parents. For example, the quality of facilities, the implementation of programs, availability and use of technology, and staff positions vary. There appear to be inequities among buildings that are not clearly understood by some administrators, staff, and parents. Ensure processes and criterion are established for equitably assigning programs and resources to buildings and using a district-wide communication plan to explain the decisions and rationale supporting the decisions to internal and external stakeholders. See statement #3 in the Vision/Mission/Goals section of this report.
14. Interviews demonstrated noteworthy inconsistencies in the operational function and evaluation of instructional support staff. Instructional support staff reported a variety of procedures for informing them of their job role and responsibilities and how they are to carry out instructional support duties assigned by the supervising teachers. Instructional support staff also indicated the evaluation process for this position is inconsistent across the district. The frequency and persons responsible for evaluation varies from building to building. District administrators are encouraged to establish an evaluation process and procedure identifying the evaluator, establishing an evaluation cycle for instructional support staff, and aligning the evaluation instrument with functions identified in the job description. Ensure all are implemented consistently throughout the system. See statement #3 in the Vision/Mission/Goals section of this report.
15. Title I teachers interviewed were unaware of the district's Parent Involvement Policy or Parent-School Compact. The district is asked to ensure all Title I staff is aware of each component of his/her Title I program. Additionally, Title I teachers were unable to demonstrate a process for program evaluation. The district must communicate its established system for annually evaluating the Title I program so that teachers can carry out

this requirement. Parents and staff must be included in the review process for the purpose of suggesting potential programming needs and/or changes.

Collaborative Relationships

In an improving district/school, stakeholders understand and support the mission and goals of the district/school and have meaningful roles in the decision-making process. Collaboration results from a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership among stakeholders from diverse community groups. Educators in the system develop and nurture a professional culture and collaborative relationships marked by mutual respect and trust inside and outside of the organization. The system works together with balance between district direction and school autonomy. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Instructional staff is provided opportunities for interaction to focus on professional issues.
- Instructional staff constructively analyzes and critiques practices and procedures including content, instruction, and assessment.
- Instructional staff follows established procedures to resolve professional conflicts, solve problems, share information about students, and communicate student information to parents.
- Processes and procedures that invite and respect stakeholder input, support, and interaction are implemented by the district/school.
- Parents are involved as partners in the educational process.
- Positive alliances among school staff, students, parents, and diverse community groups are created and nurtured.

Noted Strengths:

16. CTE Advisory Committee members expressed commitment, including financial contributions, toward the district's CTE programs. For example, the Trade Laborer's Union is now working with Lincoln High School to provide programming for students. This includes Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 30-hour certification which will apply towards apprenticeship hours for students, as well as college credit. Multiple trade representatives reported donating state-of-the-art equipment and time to ensure curriculum was relevant and pertinent. This was also noted as an area of strength in the 2006 site visit report.
17. Several interview groups reported community partnerships. Some of these included: Scavo partnership with the State Historical Society where students receive training and work as docents and tour guides; Des Moines University representatives train students at Smouse, Ruby Van Meter, and Central Campus in health topics; south side businesses showcase employment opportunities for the community; district nurses partner with Polk County Health to provide immunization clinics; businesses serve as partners in each program at Central Campus; United Way funds initiatives in schools; students have the ability to earn a \$1200 sewing machine and learn applicable trade skills through Project Sewing Machine.

Recommendations for Improvement:

18. The district is encouraged to align closely with the federal requirement regarding "Parents' Right-To-Know." Districts receiving Title I funds are required by federal legislation to provide annual notification to parents of their right to know of teacher qualifications. A process must be in place to notify parents if their child has been assigned to, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified. To fulfill this requirement, the district must provide this information to parents in a language and form they are able to understand.

19. While some examples of positive parent engagement were noted; some staff reported concerns about limited parent involvement. Continue implementing current family and community strategies to increase the involvement and contributions of parents while considering the following suggestions :

- Seek the input of parents as the district reviews the Title I Parent Involvement Policy and Parent-School Compact.
- Include parents in the annual evaluation of programs.
- Establish purposeful, organized parent groups.
- Hold public meetings to involve parents in the review of school performance and the development of school improvement plans.
- Conduct surveys that gauge parent satisfaction and support for the school.
- Provide materials and training to parents in understanding topics such as local academic standards and assessments, student progress monitoring, and how to work with educators to improve the achievement of their child.
- Consider occasionally holding parent meetings outside of the school setting where some parents might be more comfortable.
- Set timeframe expectations for administrators, teachers, and other school staff to respond to parent calls, e-mails, and inquiries.
- Consider continuing the Parent Academy model to engage parents.

20. Review of documents and interviews provided minimal evidence of a functioning SIAC. SIAC members reported the current committee membership is disproportionate with many district administrators and school staff. Membership information provided, which did not appear to reflect the 2010-11 committee, indicated the committee consists of thirty-three members. Over half, eighteen, appear to be district employees. Of the thirty-three members, nine are males and twenty-four female, and twenty-six are Caucasian with seven minority.

The district is encouraged to ensure committee membership reflects the demographics of the district's population. For example, over fifty percent of the student population consists of racial and ethnic minorities. The district is advised to maintain documentation of its efforts to seek membership representation with regard to race, national origin, and disability. As important as meeting requirements, ensuring the committee composition mirrors the community will help to ensure recommendations will meet the needs of all students served by the district.

In addition, it is important to consider the gender balance of the SIAC. Current administrative rules state, "[t]o the extent possible, committee membership shall have balanced representation with regard to race, gender, national origin, and disability." However, Iowa Code 69.16A, as amended in 2009, places a strict gender balance requirement, effective January 1, 2012, for "all appointive boards, commissions, committees, and councils of a political subdivision of the state that are established by the Code, if not otherwise provided by law." This requirement, which applies to the SIAC, defines gender balance as half male and half female for even-numbered committees or half plus one for odd-numbered committees.

Interviewees reported the responsibilities of the SIAC include serving as a forum for “checks and balances” from differing sources, bringing forth suggestions and answering questions, and making recommendations to the school board regarding student achievement goals. While interviewees stated one of the functions of the committee was to make recommendations, they further stated they have not been asked to make recommendations and do not feel comfortable making them. Comments included, “Sometimes I feel like a rubber stamp for textbook purchases,” and, “I question why anyone asks my opinion because it doesn’t seem to matter.” Committee members stated agendas typically focus on textbook adoption and presentations by district staff. In September, the committee was presented with district goals and asked to approve the goals; however, interviewees stated in order to be a thoughtful participant in the process, this information should be provided to members ahead of time so they have time to study the information.

SIAC members expressed passion regarding the need for the committee to work together to make recommendations to the school board that ensure all district students benefit from the highest quality schools and services. They desire to be specifically charged with an area of focus and asked to make a set of recommendations upon which the board will act, such as the academic achievement gap. Members indicated there are a variety of issues that could be vetted through the SIAC; however, earnest input has not been requested or expected.

The district is encouraged to ensure the SIAC understands its required responsibilities. (See non-compliance matrix.) To meet the requirements of Iowa Code section 280.12(2) as amended by 2007 Iowa Acts, Senate File 427, section 2, the board shall appoint and charge a school improvement advisory committee (SIAC) to make annual recommendations to the board. Based on the committee members' analysis of needs assessment data, they shall make recommendations to the board about the following components:

- Major educational needs;
- Student learning goals;
- Long-range goals that include, but are not limited to, the state indicators that address reading, mathematics, and science achievement; and
- Harassment or bullying prevention goals, programs, training, and other initiatives.

Consider contacting the district’s Partnership Director, Jim Verlengia from Heartland AEA (jverlengia@aea11.k12.ia.us), for assistance.

Learning Environment

In an improving district/school, the school environment is conducive to teaching and learning. The environment is safe, orderly, purposeful, and free from threat of physical, social, and emotional harm. Teachers are familiar with students' cultures and know how to work effectively in a multi-cultural setting. Students are guided to think critically about learning and have opportunities to apply learning to real world situations. Classrooms are integrated with diverse learners (i.e., gender, race, special needs, at-risk, gifted). Evidence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Rules and procedures for behavior and consequences are clearly communicated and consistently administered.
- School facilities are physically accessible and school routines enhance student learning.
- Materials, resources, technology, programs, and activities reflecting diversity are available to all students.
- The district/school provides a clean, inviting, welcoming environment.
- A clearly understood crisis management plan is established, communicated, and implemented when necessary.
- Teaching and learning are protected from external disturbances and internal distractions.
- The district/school reflects the contributions and perspectives of diverse groups and preserves the cultural dignity of staff, students, and parents.

Noted Strengths:

21. Parents, students, staff, and administrators reported diversity is viewed as a strength in the school district. A variety of opportunities to interact and create relationships with others from different cultures, races, and perspectives abound in the district. Many multi-cultural and gender-fair concepts are represented in the classroom. Some examples included, but were not limited to:

- Global foods and art activities
- Native musical and dance performances provided through clubs at high school level
- High school Straight and Gay Alliance clubs
- Best Buddies
- Social Justice
- Ellis Island Day, Cowles Elementary
- International partners, Central Academy
- Global Gala, Moulton and King elementary schools
- Brother-to-Brother

The district is commended for its current work in this area and encouraged to continue efforts to celebrate diversity and support cultural understanding.

22. Some administrators, staff, and parents reported the learning climate created by teaching staff in most schools is positive. Student-teacher relationships have been established, and teachers appear to be “in tune” to students. Parents interviewed expressed their belief that conversations are welcomed by teachers, as well as the desire of teachers to recognize the needs of each student.

23. Interview groups reported the district had received a Rapid Emergency Management grant, which deals with crisis planning for the district and individual buildings. Some buildings have completed drills to check the integrity of the plan's implementation.

Recommendations for Improvement:

24. Instructional support staff and learning support staff members indicated desire to do "whatever it takes" to help students grow and learn. This was indicated by some support staff who reported they are actively engaged and included in professional development offerings. In order for these opportunities to occur, some instructional and learning support staff currently initiate their own participation. The district is encouraged to strengthen collaboration among all staff, certified and classified. For example, identify ways to intentionally include instructional and learning support staff in professional development sessions directly related to their job functions.
25. While there were reports in some buildings safety was a strength, there were more indicators suggesting safety is a concern for many parents, support staff, teachers, and students district-wide. For example, there was an awareness of fights and other incidents after dismissal; a lack of supervision in many locations including hallways, stairwells, common areas, and street crossings; and a general sense of "looking away" by teachers. Students reported they would rather fail a physical education class than go into the locker rooms to dress out because of fear of bullying and harassment. In one interview session, eight out of twelve students reported being bullied. Many middle school students interviewed reported they knew who they could contact if they had either witnessed bullying or been bullied; however, they chose not to report in fear of retaliation. There were multiple reports there was no bullying policy in the district, and the perception that administrators and teachers are either not addressing the issues or, if penalties are provided, they are not severe enough. It is suggested the district revisit the district's bullying/harassment policy (including reporting procedures) with staff, students, and parents in multiple formats and in multiple venues multiple times throughout the school year. The district is encouraged to educate all staff, students, and parents in what bullying and harassment is, ensure building administrators and staff are consistently reporting student behavior data, share and study the data with staff and SIAC, ensure students have access to appropriately licensed staff who are trained to handle students' social/emotional concerns, and resolve to relentlessly address all student behavior issues. Contact Dave Tilly (dtilly@aea11.k12.ia.us), Director of Innovation and Accountability at Heartland Area Education Agency, for technical support in this process. Additional resources may be found on the Iowa Department of Education web site: http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1030&Itemid=1293. See statement #3 in the Vision/Mission/Goals section of this report.
26. Multiple groups including administrators, staff, and teachers reported the value of technology in the district; however, there was also an over-arching concern about the perceived inequity of the distribution and amount of technological resources available to buildings and programs in the district. Limited access prohibits students from using technology to accomplish the district end statements. It is recommended the superintendent and administrative leaders conduct a district-wide needs assessment to determine baseline data. Leaders could then develop a technology plan outlining criteria for identifying district technology priorities, hardware purchasing timeframes, a 3-5 year cycle for purchasing, and

ensuring processes for equitable distribution of technology resources. Consider contacting the district's Partnership Director from Heartland AEA for assistance in this process. This was noted as an area for improvement in the district's last site visit report, 2006. See statement #3 in the Vision/Mission/Goals section of this report.

27. When discussing transition, divergent data were encountered from multiple interview groups including parents, staff, students, and administrators. While some in each group reported transition as a positive experience with opportunities for students and parents to acclimate to the new school, there were also reports of limited support in transitioning students from middle school to high school and high school to post-secondary opportunities. Parents and teachers reported unless one had some kind of "insider privy," through a program such as iJAG, Gear Up, Talent Search, or Upward Bound, one was not likely to be aware of information regarding transition. The district is encouraged to assess the information needs of various groups of stakeholders, revisit its transition plan, and develop a district-wide communication plan for sharing with stakeholders regarding the transition process for students from level to level. It is important to include planning for those moving in from outside the district, as well as those moving across regions within the district. See statement #3 in the Vision/Mission/Goals section of this report.
28. While parents and administrators noted the dedication and support of district English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers, there were multiple concerns expressed around the provision of services for English Language Learners (ELLs). It was reported some ELLs are limited in their ability to participate in extra-curricular activities due to transportation and other issues. The three-mile transportation rule may contribute to this, as well as drop-out rates and attendance issues. In addition, it was reported student files are sometimes lost when students transfer within the district. Sometimes students are wrongly placed in classes until files are found. For example, students are sometimes asked if they are in the ESL program and the student isn't sure or says no because they no longer want to receive services. The district is encouraged to explore the uses of Infinite Campus to provide prompt transfer of student records and conduct a program evaluation in the area of ESL. Contact Heartland Area Education Agency (515-270-9030) for technical assistance and/or the Midwest Equity Assistance Center (<http://www.meac.org> , 1-785-532-6408).
29. Elementary, middle, and high school teachers reported collegiality and collaboration among teachers within their respective buildings, but little awareness, interaction, or coordination between buildings. The district is encouraged to continue developing structures to promote alignment across buildings, content areas, and grade levels to ensure continuity in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Such alignment is particularly important for entitled students who transition from one building to another as a result of Individualized Education Program (IEP) placement decisions, as well as ESL programming. The district is encouraged to investigate ways to increase awareness between and collaboration among buildings. See statement #3 in the Vision/Mission/Goals section of this report.

Curriculum and Instruction

In an improving district/school, curriculum challenges each student to excel, reflects a commitment to equity, and demonstrates an appreciation of diversity. There is an emphasis on principles of high quality instruction and clear expectations for what is taught. Educators have a common understanding of quality teaching and learning. Instruction is designed to accommodate a wide range of learners within the classroom. Teachers have knowledge and skills need to effectively implement characteristics of effective instruction. The staff accepts responsibility for the students' learning of the essential curriculum (e.g., Iowa Core Curriculum). Instructional time is allocated to support student learning. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Educators implement effective instructional practices for each and every student.
- School and classroom tasks and activities are inherently engaging, relevant, and lead to applying knowledge to authentic tasks.
- Content, instruction, assessments, and policy are aligned.
- A shared vision of effective instruction is held by all instructional staff.
- Curriculum and instruction reflect contributions from diverse racial, ethnic, and personal backgrounds.
- Students are provided opportunity and time to learn.
- Teachers are provided with an instructional framework for units that employs research-based strategies for use with diverse learner characteristics.
- Instructional decision-making utilizes a process of collecting, analyzing, and summarizing data.

Noted Strengths:

30. Several interview groups recognized the passion for teaching and learning of many professionals within the district. Each school visited by the site visit team demonstrated pride in the programs and services provided to students and the community. Students and parents reported the commitment and extra time staff members give to students to help them achieve their full potential.
31. Some teachers reported appreciation for the process used between them and school improvement leaders in defining a shared vision of effective instruction. The process is supportive and offers reflection for teachers contributing to their professional growth. Teachers shared there was a greater emphasis on instructional strategies, frequent and constructive feedback, and an increased accountability for teachers because of the shared vision of effective instruction.
32. Teachers in some buildings reported school improvement leaders are visible within the classrooms and interact with students by asking questions about what they are learning. Such interaction supports students by increasing accountability for taking ownership of their own learning. Student ownership for learning also occurs through the posting of learning objectives in classrooms as reported by some high school administrators, parents, and teachers. Learning objectives, written in student-friendly "I can" statements, foster academic success for each and every student.
33. In some buildings, teachers and administrators reported increased emphasis on data collection and analysis has improved the effectiveness of instruction in elementary and secondary classrooms. The implementation of data teams, as well as collaboration time, is contributing to students' needs being met.

34. Some elementary teachers reported the use of formative assessment allows teachers and students to set goals and measure progress throughout the year. Some parents reported students are encouraged to self-assess and participate in goal-setting during conferences.
35. In some buildings, middle school teachers reported the use of pacing guides supported instruction by making the curriculum accessible to all students and reducing redundancies and omissions for students who may transfer from school to school.
36. Teachers in some locations reported adjustments in instruction occur frequently and are based upon student data to increase students' success. Principals reported the implementation of the Response to Intervention (RtI) model is used to provide targeted instruction to match students' needs. High school and middle school administrators reported students receive additional support within the day in the form of small group instruction in mathematics and reading.

Recommendations for Improvement:

37. While curriculum areas such as health, family and consumer sciences, technology education, and career education in grades 7 and 8 may be integrated into other courses, it is advisable to document the specific standards and benchmarks and content specifications noted in Chapter 12, 281 – IAC 12.5 (4)(i)(j)(k). Doing this intentionally will ensure the district's curriculum in these areas is being taught consistently and students are prepared for the next level of learning in these areas as they move to high school. See statement #3 in the Vision/Mission/Goals section of this report.
38. Multiple interview groups reported concerns about the discrepancy between district administrators' expectations and building administrators' expectations regarding the following:
 - Special programming (e.g., Gifted and Talented, At-Risk, English as a Second Language)
 - Curriculum content and alignment with Iowa Core
 - Grading
 - Support for struggling students
 - Budget cuts/program cuts

District administrators are encouraged to engage in on-going professional dialogue about possible inconsistencies regarding the aforementioned topics, pose questions for inquiry, collect and analyze data, and use data to strengthen the educational system. See statement #3 in the Vision/Mission/Goals section of this report.

39. The district is encouraged to continue vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment efforts, including alignment with the Iowa Core and incorporating the requirements of Outcome 4, among all schools PreK-12 to establish greater consistency, uniformity, and equity in the educational program. The district is also encouraged to create a communication plan to coordinate the dissemination of expectations, content-related information, and processes for monitoring implementation. The district's administrative cabinet is encouraged to set and monitor expectations for complying with the district's direction to provide a consistent quality education program in each and every school. Such action aligns with Standard #5 of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders. This was noted as an area for improvement in the

district's last site visit report, 2006. Additionally, see statement #3 in the Vision/Mission/Goals section of this report. Once the district's direction of ensuring consistency in the educational program is achieved, the district will be positioned to move to "next steps" of successfully achieving innovative practices, programs, and initiatives.

40. While there were examples of school counseling components in the district, inequities across the district prevent the establishment of a consistent, articulated, sequential K-12 school counseling program that is comprehensive in scope, preventative in design, developmental in nature, driven by data, and integral to the school district's curricula and instructional program as noted in Iowa Code 281-IAC12.3(11). Several interview groups reported staffing levels of school counselors are either insufficient or non-existent to provide programming in each of the four delivery areas of curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support. Some interviewees reported the choice of providing a counselor and school counseling program in each building was the decision of individual building principals, even though access to the aforementioned is required by law. Additionally, building and central office administrators have an ethical obligation, expected as a condition of licensure, to ensure required programs are implemented.

To ensure each student's access to a school counselor and a quality school counseling program, the district is encouraged to review and resolve the current inequities while developing an articulated, sequential program including the four delivery components aforementioned. This can be accomplished through a comprehensive program audit with goals and outcomes established, followed by a gap analysis among district goals, current services, planned services, program components, and staffing levels. A clear action plan and regular program review and evaluation need to be established. The district is encouraged to plan and provide opportunities for K-12 systemic professional development and collaboration among guidance counselors. Consider accessing the following resource: Iowa School Counseling – A Program Framework, located on the Iowa Department of Education web site:

http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=716&Itemid=1549 and seeking assistance from Heartland AEA. Please refer to the Chapter 12 Non-compliance Matrix at the end of this report and see statement #3 in the Vision/Mission/Goals section of this report.

41. Teachers serving students who are English language learners indicated a concern regarding the lack of various forms of assessment data upon which to base placement decisions. Consider collaborating with Heartland AEA 11 and/or with the Iowa Department of Education (i.e. John Scott, john.scott@iowa.gov) to identify possible assessment strategies.
42. The district is encouraged to continue to work with support staff, teachers, and administrators in ongoing training and implementation of the RtI process. Although pieces of the RTI process are in place such as data teams to collect, analyze, and interpret data for reading, there are other components in the decision-making process that have not been implemented with fidelity. Research supports the effectiveness of this process for helping meet the needs of all learners. This practice is also embedded into federal and state law as one component of the special education eligibility decision making. The district is encouraged to contact the district's Partnership Director at Heartland AEA to coordinate consultation in implementing this process.

43. Teacher interview groups reported special education teachers provide additional instruction to general education students in need of supplemental interventions. This practice is often called “incidental benefit” and is acceptable when teachers are primarily providing the necessary supports and services to students with Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) at the same time. The district is encouraged to ensure that these practices remain within the boundaries of incidental benefit and are monitored regularly.
44. Since its last site visit in 2006, the district has developed a credible practice of co-teaching and collaboration. The district is to be commended for the pockets of success that currently exist. Many positive examples of progress and teacher collaboration were noted during the current visit; however, inconsistency in teachers’ understanding and implementation still exist. The district is encouraged to review its District Developed Service Delivery Plan with particular attention to professional development and strategies for monitoring its plan. Consider contacting the district’s Partnership Director at Heartland AEA to coordinate on-site training.
45. Multiple interview groups reported the district offers coursework for high school credit at some middle schools. For example, students at some middle schools are able to gain high school credit for Algebra I and U.S. Government by successfully completing coursework while in the middle school setting. It is recommended the district document the coursework offered at the middle school level for high school credit; establish clear entry and exit criteria; follow the same syllabus, textbooks, materials, and assessments used for the high school course; provide the same opportunity for all middle school students in all middle school buildings; and document teachers are appropriately licensed to teach the courses. These expectations apply to each and every high school credit-bearing course taught at the middle school level for high school credit. While the district is well-intentioned in providing opportunities for middle-school at-risk students to be on pace for high school graduation, it should not be at the expense of exposure to the guaranteed, viable curriculum intended for middle school students without the use of data and entry criteria for making enrollment decisions. Please refer to the non-compliance matrix at the end of this report. For example, The district has been offering and teaching U.S. Government, a high school credit course, for high school credit to 8th grade students in five of the district’s ten middle schools. The following issues contribute to the fact this is out of compliance with Iowa Administrative Code:
- Specifically, Iowa Administrative Code 256.11 states, “In grades 9-12, a unit of credit consists of a course or equivalent related components or partial units taught throughout the academic year. The minimum program to be offered and taught for grades nine through twelve is: Five units of social studies including instruction in voting statutes and procedures, voter registration requirements, the use of paper ballots and voting systems in the election process, and the method of acquiring and casting an absentee ballot. All students shall complete a minimum of one-half unit of United States government and one unit of United States history. The one-half unit of United States government shall include the voting procedure as described in this lettered paragraph and section 280.9A. The government instruction shall also include a study of the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights contained in the Constitution and an assessment of a student’s knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.” The course must only be offered and taught in grades 9-12.
 - 281 – IAC 12.5(5)(b) states U.S. government is required as a condition of graduation.

46. The district could benefit from conducting a gap analysis of the district's comprehensive K–12 Gifted and Talented program and requirements cited in Iowa Code 281—IAC 12.5(12) compared to the programming and services delivered. For example, some interviewees reported the ability for teachers to provide G/T services and resources at some levels of the system is impacted by the support and access allowed by some building administrators. Based on interview data, areas for focus might include: clarity and communication of K–12 identification criteria and procedures, program content, rigor and accessibility of offerings at the building level, budget for appropriate utilization of G/T funds, and differentiation in classrooms and courses through consultation with endorsed G/T teachers. The district is also encouraged to continue to seek feedback from teachers, students, and parents as part of a comprehensive program evaluation. Consider contacting Mary Schmidt, Consultant for Gifted and Talented at Heartland AEA 11 (mschmidt@aea11.k12.ia.us, 515–270–0405, ext. 14375) or Rosanne Malek, Consultant for Gifted and Talented and Fine Arts at the Iowa Department of Education (rosanne.malek@iowa.gov, 515–281–3199) for assistance. Resources, including a self-evaluation tool, can be found through Heartland AEA web site: <http://www.aea11.k12.ia.us/educators/gifted/index.html> ..

Similar concerns were identified in the 2006 accreditation visit report. See statement #3 in the Vision/Mission/Goals section of this report.

Professional Development

In an improving district/school, staff is qualified for assignments and engages in ongoing learning opportunities to improve effectiveness. Student achievement and other sources of data are used to set goals for professional development. The district provides professional learning opportunities that include theory, demonstration, practice, and coaching. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Professional development focus is determined through the analysis of student achievement and performance data.
- Professional development is focused and based on research-based strategies.
- Professional development sessions build on one another, are distributed throughout the school year, and are sustained over time.
- Time is provided for teachers to collaborate and apply new content and pedagogical knowledge.
- An established system provides support to monitor and evaluate implementation of professional development and its impact on student learning.
- Formative student data and teacher implementation data are used to adjust professional development and guide instructional decisions.
- All school staff members, instructional and non-instructional, are provided professional development to support job roles and functions.
- Professional development activities contribute to the capacity of all school staff to develop cultural competence and to reflect and respect diversity in classroom and work environments.

Noted Strengths:

47. Central office administrators reported the district has developed a vision for a comprehensive professional development program, focused on building capacity at the individual, building, and district levels. The three year plan includes the following primary areas of focus:

- Content and knowledge
- Effective teaching and learning strategies
- Climate and cultural awareness
- Technology-curriculum integration

Organizational goals were outlined as overarching concepts that would lead to enhanced learning environments, use of effective instructional strategies, and assessments to meet the needs of all students, resulting in enhanced student achievement.

48. In some locations, teachers reported principals attend and participate in professional development sessions and engage in follow-up conversations. Some principals were commended by their staff for modeling good instructional strategies within their own building meetings and trainings.

49. Schools are at varying levels of implementing data teams. Teachers in schools who are participating in data team training and are focused on the implementation of these teams reported data team work helps guide instruction, holds students and teachers accountable, and assists in determining the makeup of flexible student grouping. In addition, teachers reported data team training has allowed them to tailor school building professional

development based on careful collaboration and analysis of student achievement data. A focus of data team work has been collaboration among teachers and administrators. Teachers reported, "Our school is doing the best work we have ever done."

Recommendations for Improvement:

50. As noted, the district has created a comprehensive professional development plan. It appears the plan is in the early stages of implementation. Multiple interview groups indicated the district's plan includes too many initiatives and lacks focus. The following were noted by the visiting team as inconsistencies:

- Lack of clarity concerning focus and expectations
- Alignment with building and individual professional development plans
- Explicit connection to the summative evaluation process for teachers
- Limited coordination and consistency for implementation throughout the buildings
- Use of professional development time to address building priorities without mention of alignment to the district's plan

Stakeholders did not report ownership of the changes with the professional development plan and the topics to be covered. In order to eliminate confusion, the district is encouraged to communicate frequently and clearly the over-arching concepts, alignment to building activities, and expectations for implementation of professional development district-wide. Consider the following suggestions:

- Ensure collaborative work at the building/grade levels is planned intentionally to support implementation of aligned district, building, and individual teacher growth plans.
- Determine how implementation will be monitored and documented to ensure strategies are implemented with fidelity.
- Ensure building-level planning teams analyze formative and summative implementation data to make ongoing adjustments in professional development.
- Ensure theory, demonstration, practice, and feedback are incorporated into district and building-level professional development sessions.

As future professional development is planned, consider support for professional development through the following:

- Cultural competency training for all staff, focusing on the subgroups and ethnicity found throughout the district
- Giving information to buildings in a more timely manner about district directed topics in order to assist in their planning for the following year
- Providing opportunities for all para-professionals to receive certification through Heartland AEA online learning options
- Providing opportunities for counselors, teacher librarians, and nurses to meet as groups for networking and collaborating
- Ensuring effective use of time with block scheduling to increase student engagement
- Learning ELL strategies for use in the general education classroom
- Learning to use of technology currently in place to enhance instructional strategies

Contact the district's Partnership Director from Heartland AEA to coordinate assistance.
See statement #3 in the Vision/Mission/Goals section of this report.

Monitoring and Accountability

In an improving district/school, the district/school establishes a comprehensive system that monitors and documents performance of student progress, curriculum, instruction, programs, and initiatives. Results from assessments drive the goal setting and decision-making processes. Leadership supports a system that regularly analyzes student performance and program effectiveness. Instructional decision-making utilizes a process of collecting, analyzing, and summarizing data. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- A system for district-wide student assessments, including multiple measures that are valid and reliable, is implemented.
- Decision-making for the continuous improvement of instruction and student learning using student achievement and teacher implementation data is employed.
- The district's/school's cycle of program evaluation as noted in its CSIP is implemented.
- Summative evaluation processes are used to determine whether professional development has resulted in improved student learning.

Noted Strengths:

51. The Title I program is driven by student achievement data. Students are served in flexible groups that change according to student need. Noted sources of data supporting decisions regarding student placement include intervention data, Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), and pre- and post-tests which are all analyzed within data teams. An additional source of data for placement in reading services includes the Basic Reading Inventory (BRI).
52. Although individual student areas of noncompliance were identified during the district's Special Education program procedural compliance review completed last fall, evidence has been submitted as of March 2, 2011 that these corrections have been made. The DE has also received a copy of the AEA letter stating that the district level corrective action plan (CAP) has been fully implemented within the required timelines and all requirements have been met.
53. The district reported the use of strategies that ensure poor and minority students are not taught at a higher rate than other students by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers. Interviews indicated teachers' assignments are frequently changed every few years. Interviewees comments included, "We work to assure our best teachers are assigned to our students who are most at-risk", "We look at kids' needs", and "Staff understand there is no guarantee that experienced teachers will be able to teach what they have always taught."

Recommendations for Improvement:

54. While many interviewees spoke about using data, a review of some of the highest profile documents related to data tended to produce tables of data rather than graphs depicting trend lines. The district is encouraged to consider how various data displays might be helpful for viewing important relationships among data. Additionally, consider how data displays may assist with other academic-related data besides achievement data. The district could benefit from examining technology availability, suspension data, academic growth of gifted learners and other subgroups through creative data displays. Contact Heartland AEA Consultant, Mike Szymczuk (msymczuk@aea11.k12.ia.us), for assistance. Please refer to

the Appendix following the report for examples of graphs depicting trend lines.

55. A review of district documents indicates non-compliance with Gifted and Talented categorical funds. The duties and responsibilities of some individual salaries funded with G/T funds do not align with the purpose of providing a G/T program.

Gifted and talented funding is included in the school district cost per pupil calculated under the school foundation formula. This amount must account for no more than 75 percent of the school district's total gifted and talented budget. The school district must also provide a local match from the school district's regular program school district cost, and this portion must be a minimum of 25 percent of the total gifted and talented budget. In addition, a school district may have donations and grants, and the school district may contribute more local school district resources toward the program. The 75 percent portion, the local match, and all donations and grants shall be accounted for as categorical funding. Inappropriate uses of the gifted and talented program funding include, but are not limited to, indirect costs or use charges, operational or maintenance costs, capital expenditures other than equipment, student transportation, administrative costs, or any other expenditures not directly related to providing the gifted and talented program beyond the scope of the regular classroom.

Any portion of categorical funding provided by the state not expended by the end of the fiscal year in which received by, or for, which allocated to the school district or area education agency, shall be carried forward as a reserved fund balance and added to the subsequent year's budget for that purpose. The funding can only be expended for the purposes permitted for that categorical funding. Where a local match is required for categorical funding, the amount unexpended at the end of the fiscal year that is carried forward shall not be used as part of the required local match.

56. Review of documents and interviews with some staff members indicated a formal process for program evaluation to determine the impact of district resource allocation is limited. For example, there were minimal data related to the effectiveness of various initiatives such as the school improvement leader job functions, Gifted and Talented program, and professional development. Although interviewees reported positively about certain aspects of programs, when probed about how effectiveness is monitored, most evidence referred to informal or observational data. When asked about how programs are evaluated, responses tended to be anecdotal, reflecting usage of satisfaction data as evidence of program effectiveness. Student outcomes were not typically mentioned as a part of evaluation. In order to provide internal and external stakeholders with a clear understanding of district priorities, it may be helpful to clarify program goals and use a district-wide communication plan for strategically disseminating information about progress towards goals. As part of the evaluation process, consider the following questions:

- What data will best determine to what degree programs meet their individual and district goals?
- What are data saying and what further questions do data cause?
- What data will best inform stakeholders (e.g., administrators, teachers, support staff, students, parents, and community) in a user-friendly way?
- When do stakeholders need to learn about program progress?

The district may wish to consider adopting a standard evaluation protocol and train staff in its use. In addition, the district could benefit from applying such an evaluation protocol to all existing programs and initiatives to assist in identifying programs and initiatives needing revision, elimination, or expansion. An established evaluation protocol, used consistently across the district, could assist in providing focus for district-wide conversations. Consider contacting Mike Szymczuk (mszymczuk@aea11.k12.ia.us), Assessment Consultant at Heartland AEA, to coordinate assistance.

57. The school board is encouraged to continue seeking, analyzing, and using student achievement data through multiple approaches at the building and district levels as the basis for decision-making. This will enable the school board to identify disparities in instructional programs; assist in ensuring resources are distributed equitably, as well as allocating resources according to unique building needs; and differentiate professional development efforts based on individual building and teacher needs. Reporting these outcomes may also create a greater sense of transparency within the district and community. See statement #3 in the Vision/Mission/Goals section of this report.
58. District administrators and building principals were not able to describe the extent to which district or building discipline data were analyzed or disaggregated by demographic indicators. The district is encouraged to move to the next level of data analysis of discipline and social/emotional student data. For example, data identifying the types of discipline incidents that occur, and the location and time of day incidents occur, assist in making decisions which can focus instruction for teaching positive behaviors. Knowing the demographic aspect of these data can further strengthen and focus interventions. Contact the district's Partnership Director from Heartland AEA to coordinate assistance.
59. The use of data teams has been established in a number of schools across the district as a way to collect and analyze student data to help inform instructional decisions. This initiative has promoted a focus on making data-based decisions and consideration of individual student progress. Some common assessments have been established and are used district-wide; however, implementation is inconsistent. Furthermore, administrator and teacher interview data indicates inconsistency across buildings in the structure and manner in which data teams operate.

As a next step, consider establishing a systemic structure, including clear guidelines and expectations, regarding the manner in which data teams operate to maximize team effectiveness. Steps might include the following:

- Deciding what data will be collected
- Analyzing the data to identify student needs and consider potential opportunities to group students, within and across classrooms, with common instructional needs
- Collaborating to determine what instructional strategies will be best matched to students' needs, as well as determining a timeframe of implementation
- Determining a plan for evaluating the effectiveness of instructional strategies implemented

Consider contacting the district's Partnership Director from Heartland AEA 11 for additional resources and support.

60. Although the use of data teams has been established in a number of buildings, it was unclear from teacher and administrator interviews how data were specifically being used to affect instructional practices within the classroom consistently among schools engaged in the effort. For example, one school staff reported engaging in a three-week check-in within the six-week period to determine the instructional approaches and strategies needing to be changed. This was an isolated report. In addition, teacher interview data indicated, at times, data-based instructional decisions were made solely by individual teachers. Intervention decisions were often described as occurring solely within the individual classroom. Consider the broader use of resources across classrooms and programs. Consider establishing a time for data teams to specifically collaborate regarding instructional practices and matching instruction to student need. In addition, consider establishing a systematic way for teachers to share resources and suggestions of effective strategies. The district is encouraged to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of intervention strategies.
61. BEDS HQT data and interviewees indicated the district's special education teachers use the consultative model inconsistently to provide instructional and support services to students receiving special education services. Site interviews also indicated components constituting the model may not be in place in each building. The district is encouraged to strengthen the implementation of the consultative model and seek assistance from Heartland AEA as needed.
62. Multiple groups reported the position of school improvement leaders (SIL) in buildings; however, the job responsibilities of each SIL appear to vary significantly based on administrator choice and/or building need. The variance in job role from building to building may be impacting the SIL's capacity to carry out the assignments if they have inadequate training, experience, or licensure. Examples of SIL job functions included the following:
- Taking and following-up on attendance
 - Content area coaching
 - Counseling
 - Analyzing data
 - Disciplining students
 - Evaluating teachers
 - Providing professional development

The superintendent and administrators are encouraged to re-examine the alignment of the intended SIL job description with current practices (i.e., classroom instructional coach without administrative duties). Determine qualitative and quantitative data points aligned with the original purpose of the job role to collect, analyze, and to use in determining effectiveness. See statement #3 in the Vision/Mission/Goals section of this report.

Des Moines Independent Community School District's Compliance Status for Applicable Federal Programs:

Title IIA (Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund)

The district has no citations of Title IIA non-compliance identified during this visit.

Title IID (Enhancing Education through Technology, E2T2)

The district does not have one or more of the following: a definition for technology literacy or an assessment of students' technology literacy by the end of the eighth grade.

Title III (English Language Learners)

The district has no citations of Title III non-compliance identified during this visit.

Title IVA (Safe and Drug Free Schools)

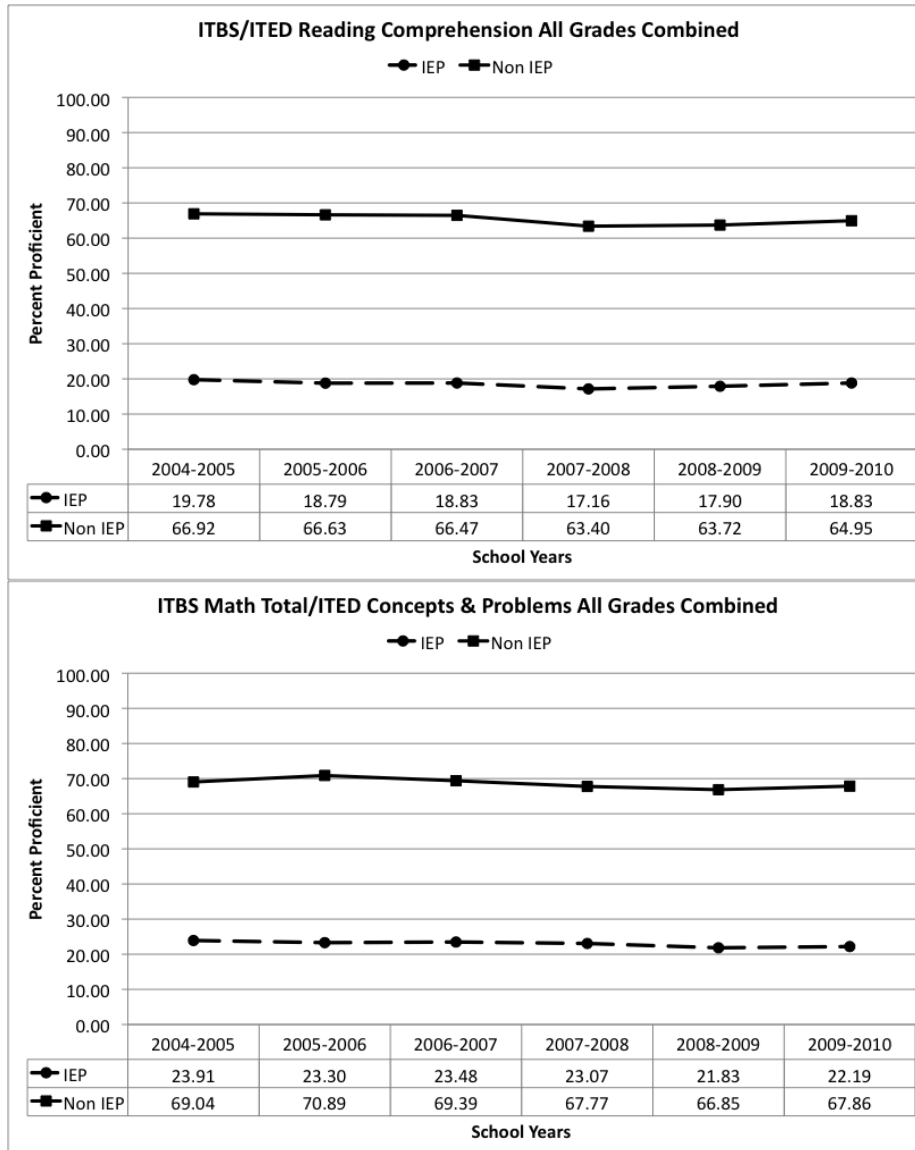
The district has one or more citations of Title IVA (SDFSC) non-compliance identified during this visit.

Title XC (Education of Homeless Children and Youth)

The district has no citations of Title XC non-compliance identified during this visit.

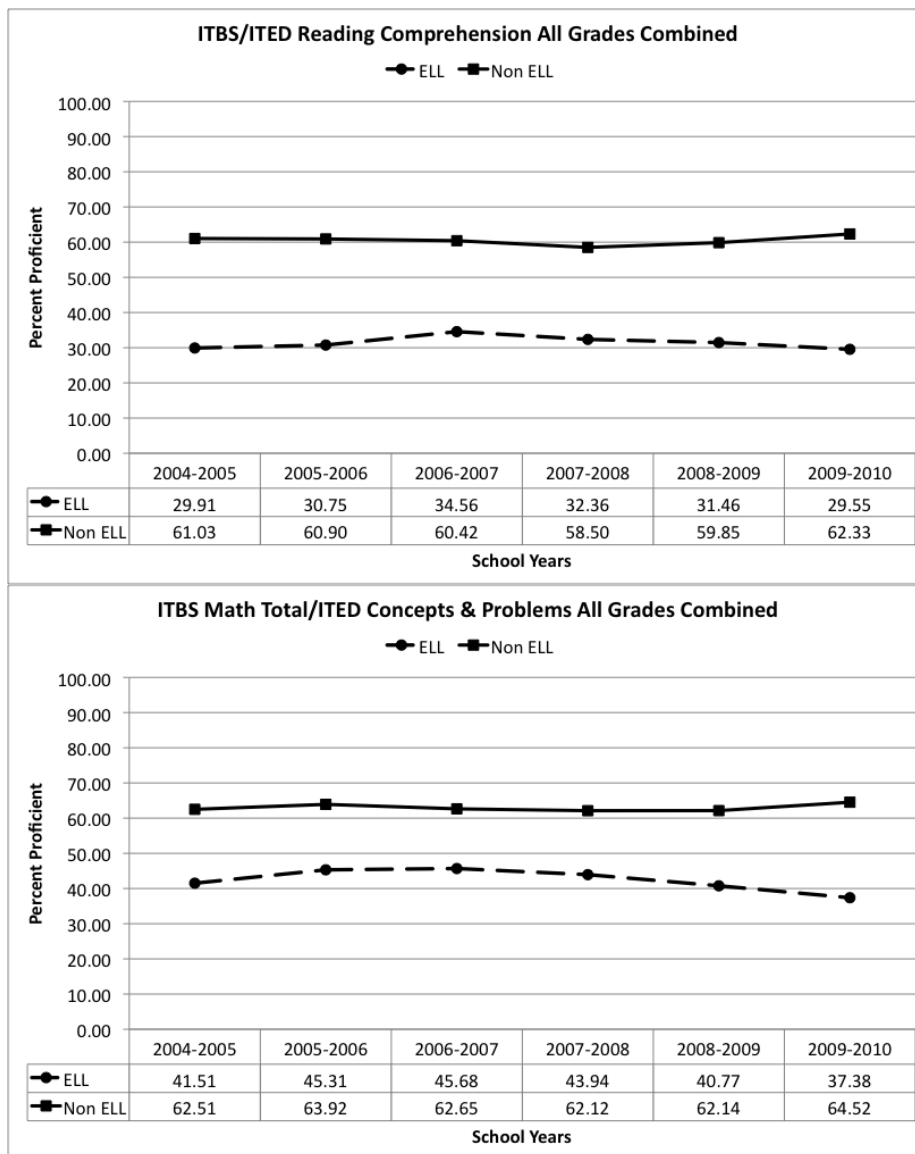
APPENDIX

Data for the following displays were taken from EdInsight, the Iowa Department of Education data warehouse.



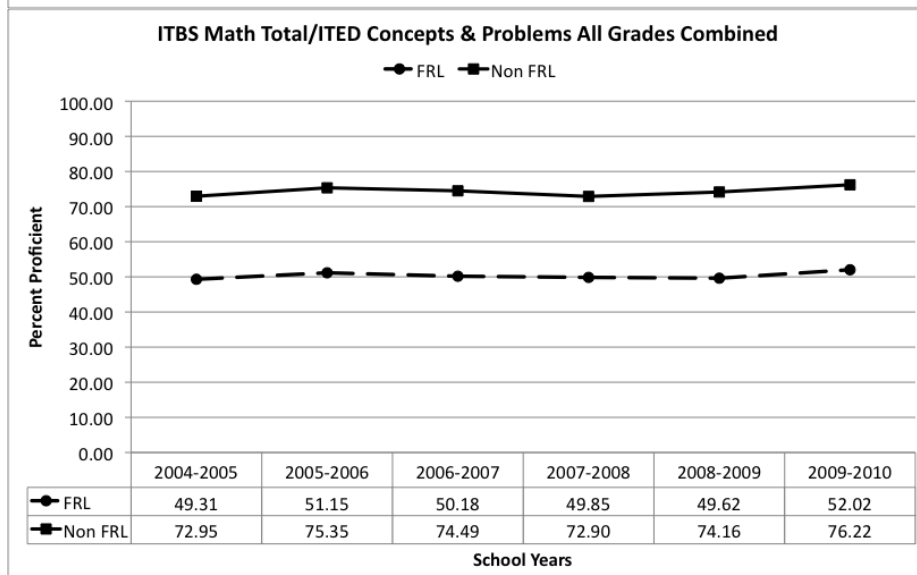
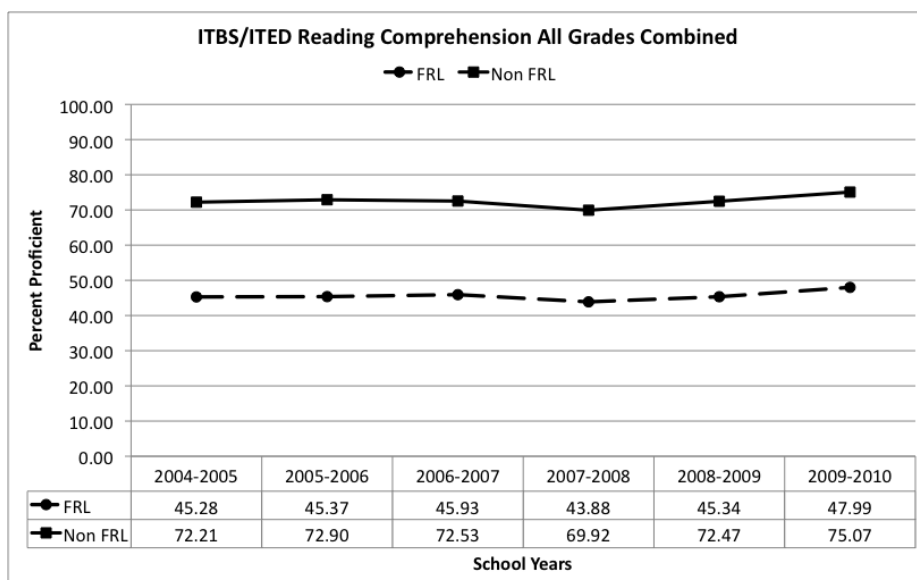
Six years of data for ITBS and ITED reading and mathematics, aggregated across all grades and students tested indicated a significant discrepancy between students with and students without IEPs. In general, a greater percentage of students were proficient in math than reading. Over all, there is a slight trend towards a lower percentage of proficient students for both groups.

For the 2009-2010 year, roughly one out of five IEP students were proficient in reading and mathematics (18.83% for reading, 22.19% for math). For those not on an IEP, roughly two out of three students were proficient (64.95% for reading, 67.86% for math).



Six years of data for ITBS and ITED reading and mathematics, aggregated across all grades and students tested indicated a moderate discrepancy between students who are English Language Learners (ELL) and non-ELL students. For the ELL students, a greater percentage of students are proficient in mathematics than reading. For the ELL population, the trend is generally towards lower achievement for both reading and mathematics. This may reflect changes in the ELL population over the six-year period.

For the 2009-2010 year, roughly three or four out of ten ELL students were proficient in reading and mathematics (29.55% for reading, 37.38% for math). For those not identified as ELL, roughly two out of three students were proficient (62.33% for reading, 64.52% for math).



Six years of data for ITBS and ITED reading and mathematics, aggregated across all grades and students tested indicated a moderate discrepancy between students who are on Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL) and students who are not. For the FRL students, a greater percentage of students are proficient in mathematics than reading. For the FRL population, there is a slight trend towards higher achievement for both groups.

For the 2009-2010 year, roughly half of FRL students were proficient in reading and mathematics (47.99% for reading, 52.02% for math). For those not on FRL, roughly two out of three students were proficient (75.07% for reading, 76.22% for math).

Areas of Non-Compliance: Chapter 12

The Des Moines Independent School District shall submit a plan of correction for each non-compliance item listed below to the Site Visit Team Leader within 45 business days of the receipt of this report. Evidence of corrective action for non-compliance(s) may be submitted with the plan or at a later date in accordance with the noted timeline. The district may choose to use the following matrix as a format for the development of an action plan or develop its own.

Chapter 12 Non-compliance Issues	Feedback	Evidence Needed	Plan of Correction	Timeline for Completion
1. GR1 The board does not have a policy establishing local graduation requirements. 281—IAC 12.3(5)	Policy #645 does not specifically state the graduations requirements. The policy must be consistent with 281 – IAC 12.5(5) which states, “Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year graduating class, all students in schools and school districts shall satisfactorily complete at least 4 units of English/Language Arts, 3 units of mathematics, 3 units of science, 3 units of social studies, and one full unit of physical education as conditions of graduation.”	Submit revised policy 645 along with board meeting minutes highlighting the board’s approval of the policy.		August 1, 2011
2. School Library policies LP11.2 No evidence exists that the board has adopted policies to address confidentiality of student library records. 281—IAC 12.3(12) LP11.3 No evidence exists that the board has adopted policies to address legal and ethical use of information resources, including plagiarism and	Policy #610 was submitted regarding selection and reconsideration of library materials. No evidence was provided of a board policy regarding confidentiality of student library records. No evidence was provided of a board policy regarding legal and ethical use of information resources, including plagiarism and intellectual property rights.	Submit policies, along with board meeting minutes highlighting the board’s approval of the policy.		August 1, 2011

Chapter 12 Non-compliance Issues	Feedback	Evidence Needed	Plan of Correction	Timeline for Completion
intellectual property rights. 281—IAC 12.3(12)				
3. MCGF1 No MCGF board policy exists. 281—IAC 12.5(8).	<p>Policy #601 presented as evidence of the districts multi-cultural/gender fair policy omits the district's intent to incorporate multicultural approaches into its educational program as defined by the following: approaches which foster knowledge of, and respect for the historical and contemporary contributions of diverse cultural groups, including race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, and socioeconomic background. The contributions and perspectives of Asian Americans, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, American Indians, European Americans, and persons with disabilities. .</p> <p>The policy also omits the district's intent to incorporate gender fair approaches into the education program which foster knowledge of, and respect and appreciation for, the historical and contemporary contributions of women and men to society. The program shall reflect the wide variety of roles open to both women and men and provide equal opportunity to both sexes.</p> <p>While the revised policy does not need to use the exact wording as above, the policy should be reflective of the above. Please refer to 1.f on the Document Review Checklist and Non-Regulatory Guidance for School Districts. The policy may be incorporated, or distinct from, the district's policy regarding equal opportunity in the educational program provided to all students regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, socioeconomic status, disability, religion, or creed.</p>	While Policy #601 does serve a purpose, submit revised policy #601 or a new policy focused specifically on incorporating multi-cultural/gender fair approaches into the educational program. Also, submit school board meeting minutes highlighting the board's approval of the policy.		August 1, 2011

Chapter 12 Non-compliance Issues	Feedback	Evidence Needed	Plan of Correction	Timeline for Completion
	(281 – IAC 12.1(1), Iowa Code 280.3.			
4. CL8 Graduating seniors are being released more than five days early, excluding weather related extensions. 281—IAC 12.1(7)	Because seniors graduate anywhere between May 23 and May 31, seniors are scheduled for less than 175 days of instruction.	Submit a detailed calendar for the 2011-2012 school year noting professional development days, early dismissals/late starts, school breaks, holidays, graduation dates for each high school, last day of school, and last day of school for seniors.		June 1, 2011
5. School Improvement Advisory Committee SIAC6 No evidence exists that the district, to the extent possible, has made an effort to seek balanced representation of race, gender, national origin, and disability for the school improvement advisory committee. 281-IAC 12.2 SIAC2 The School Improvement Advisory Committee does not consist of members representing all of the following: parents, students, teachers, administrators, and community members.	The board's appointment of the 2010-2011 SIAC membership was verified; however, the list denoting gender, race, national origin, and disability is out of date. Additionally, the meeting minutes for the 9/1/10 SIAC meeting indicated SIAC's revision of goals are not yet ready.	Provide a list of 2010-2011 SIAC members denoting representation by gender, race, national origin, and disability and including more than one teacher. Additionally, provide school board meeting minutes demonstrating the SIAC presented goals to the board for the 2010-2011 school year.		September 30, 2011

Chapter 12 Non-compliance Issues	Feedback	Evidence Needed	Plan of Correction	Timeline for Completion
<p>281—IAC 12.8(1)(a)(2)</p> <p>SIAC4 The School Improvement Advisory Committee does not make annual recommendations to the board with regard to progress toward annual improvement goals, progress toward local indicators, and annual improvement goals for the next school year.</p> <p>281—IAC 12.8(1)(a)(3)</p>				
<p>6. School Counseling Program</p> <p>SCP1 The district does not have a school counseling program (grades 6-12). 281—IAC 12.3(11)</p> <p>SCP4. No evidence exists that a school counselor serves as a member of the instructional team for</p>	<p>Counselors' schedules were not provided for review to verify delivery of the instruction of the school counseling program K-12.</p> <p>Counselors' schedules were not provided to verify delivery of the school counseling program at each attendance center. Classroom schedules did not verify this, as well.</p> <p>Documentation did not allow verification that the school counseling program assists all students with individual planning.</p> <p>K-5 curriculum was verified; however, no documentation of the curriculum 6-12 was provided. Review of the district's counselor</p>	<p>Submit a plan for the full implementation (by the start of the 2012-2013 school year) of a K-12 comprehensive school counseling program with the required components noted in the non-compliance statements, the district's implementation timeline, staffing schedule ensuring the program is provided to all students in each grade level at each school building, licenses of individuals delivering the school counseling program, and management plan by level, as well as K-12.</p>		<p>June1, 2012 and on-going annually until the district's next accreditation site visit</p>

Chapter 12 Non-compliance Issues	Feedback	Evidence Needed	Plan of Correction	Timeline for Completion
<p>each attendance center (K-12). 281—IAC 12.3(11)(a)</p> <p>SCP5. No evidence exists that the school counseling program is regularly reviewed, revised and designed to provide curriculum that is embedded throughout the district's overall curriculum. 281—IAC 12.3(11)(b)(1)</p> <p>SCP6 No evidence exists that the school counseling program is regularly reviewed, revised and designed to provide individual student planning. 281—IAC 12.3(11)</p> <p>SCP7 No evidence exists that the school counseling program is regularly reviewed, revised and designed to provide responsive services to meet students' immediate and future needs. 281—IAC 12.3(11)</p>	<p>webnode also did not provide this information.</p>			

Chapter 12 Non-compliance Issues	Feedback	Evidence Needed	Plan of Correction	Timeline for Completion
7. HSPELA2 The English-language arts program for grades 9-12 does not contain six units. 281—IAC 12.5(5)(a)	Scavo is short one unit of the six units of English/ Language Arts required of a comprehensive high school. For further detailed information, refer to the Chapter 12 Matrix October 2010 located on the Iowa Department of Education web site: http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1558&Itemid=2342#SiteVisits	Submit Scavo's 2011-2012 course registration handbook highlighting six full units of English/language arts courses. Submit the enrollment for each course comprising six units of English/language arts. In the absence of enrollment fulfilling a comprehensive high school's offer and teach requirement, the school would need to submit a Chapter 12 Waiver Request.		August 1, 2011 October 20, 2011
8. HSPM3 The mathematics program for grades 9-12 does not contain two additional units in addition to the four sequential units. 281—IAC 12.5(5)c	Scavo is short one unit of unit of mathematics. Four units preparatory to college plus two additional units are required of a comprehensive high school. For further detailed information, refer to the Chapter 12 Matrix October 2010 located on the Iowa Department of Education web site: http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1558&Itemid=2342#SiteVisits	Submit Scavo's 2011-2012 course registration handbook highlighting six full units of mathematics courses. Submit the enrollment for each course comprising six units of English/language arts. In the absence of enrollment fulfilling a comprehensive high school's offer and teach requirement, the school would need to submit a Chapter 12 Waiver Request.		August 1, 2011 October 20, 2011
9. School Educational Program EPRO1 The elementary program, grades 1-6, does not include each curricular area. 281—IAC 12.5(3) JHP1 The junior high program, grades 7 and 8 does not include each curricular area. 281—IAC 12.5(4)	The site visit team was unable to verify identified curricular areas in the following schools for the following teachers: Cowles – Technology education in grades 7 and 8 Downtown School – No counseling curriculum or counselors assigned. Since health is taught through projects, please verify the health standards and benchmarks addressed for the grades served. Hanawalt – Health, guidance, science, and social studies for grades 1-5 Moulton – Health in grades 3-5, PE in 5 th grade, music and art in 5 th grade, and guidance in grades 1-5	Submit documentation demonstrating each school noted offers and teaches the content/programs listed.		August 10, 2011

Chapter 12 Non-compliance Issues	Feedback	Evidence Needed	Plan of Correction	Timeline for Completion
	<p><u>Perkins</u> – Counseling for Cain; counseling for Larson; counseling for Cropp; counseling for Enloe; counseling for Johnson</p> <p><u>Walnut Street</u> –Please verify art and music for the grades served. Art concepts are addressed in grades 1 and 3. Please verify how all Chapter 12 art content specifications are covered in grades 1-5.</p> <p>The site visit team was unable to verify the identified curricular areas in the following schools:</p> <p><u>Brody</u> – Guidance grades 6-8; health 6-8; career education grades 7-8</p> <p><u>Moulton</u> – Guidance, health, PE, art, grades 6-8; family and consumer sciences, career education and technology education in grades 7-8</p> <p><u>Callanan</u> – Health and guidance grades 6-8; family and consumer sciences and career education in grades 7-8.</p> <p><u>Goodrell</u> – Guidance grades 6-8; career education in 7-8. Schedule review indicated music is only taught as band and orchestra. How are the remaining content specifications (Chapter 12) incorporated in grades 6-8? Government for 8th grade is on the schedule. Is this offered and taught for high school credit? If so, please clarify what the entrance requirements are, as well as is the content the same as the high school course syllabus, are the same assessments as the high school course used, and is the teacher licensed for grades 9-12?</p> <p><u>Harding</u> –art and guidance grades 6-8; and family and consumer sciences for grades 7-8. FCS is incorporated into science. Please document the delivery of Chapter 12 content specifications.</p>			

Chapter 12 Non-compliance Issues	Feedback	Evidence Needed	Plan of Correction	Timeline for Completion
	<p>Hiatt – art, and guidance at 6-8; FCS, and tech ed in grades 7-8. FCS is incorporated into communications. Please document the delivery of Chapter 12 content specifications.</p> <p>McCombs – Does a guidance counselor serve the school? Since the wheel class was cut, how is the guidance curriculum delivered, including career education and ihaveaplan? Clarify how health education is provided in 8th grade.</p> <p>Weeks – Verify counseling at each of grades 6-8. The most recent schedule submitted by the principal refers to the counseling department and its focus in 8th grade in developing ihaveaplan. Do counselors deliver any other domain of a school counseling program in addition to career planning in each of the classrooms at each of the grades? Please clarify.</p>			
<p>10. 256.11 The district has created the circumstance for some 8th graders to be excluded from some programming required by law to be offered and taught to all students in grades 9 -12. IAC 256.11, 5.b.</p>	<p>The district has been offering and teaching U.S. Government, a high school credit course, for high school credit to 8th grade students in five of the district's ten middle schools. The following issues contribute to the fact this is out of compliance with Iowa Administrative Code:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specifically, Iowa Administrative Code 256.11 states, "In grades 9-12, a unit of credit consists of a course or equivalent related components or partial units taught throughout the academic year. The minimum program to be offered and taught for grades nine through twelve is: Five units of social studies including instruction in voting statutes and procedures, voter registration requirements, the use of paper ballots and voting systems in the election process, and the method of acquiring and casting an absentee ballot. All students shall complete a minimum of one-half unit of United States government and one unit of United 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> U.S. Government: Provide a written assurance from the superintendent that U.S. Government is not being taught for high school credit to students below grade 9. U.S. Government: Provide the master schedule for each middle school verifying U.S. Government is not scheduled for the 2010-2011 school year. High school credit bearing courses not required as a condition of graduation being taught to students below grade 9: Provide the high school course syllabus, as well as the syllabus for the same course being taught below grade 9. Provide the reference information for the course text (used at high school and middle school). Provide the names and folder numbers of the individuals teaching the high school credit bearing course to students below grade 9. Provide the curriculum used for the course taught at 		<p>August 15, 2011</p>

Chapter 12 Non-compliance Issues	Feedback	Evidence Needed	Plan of Correction	Timeline for Completion
	<p>States history. The one-half unit of United States government shall include the voting procedure as described in this lettered paragraph and section 280.9A. The government instruction shall also include a study of the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights contained in the Constitution and an assessment of a student's knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights." The course must only be offered and taught in grades 9-12.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 281 – IAC 12.5(5)(b) states U.S. government is required as a condition of graduation. • Courses otherwise offered and taught in grades 9-12 and considered as an opportunity for students below grade 9 to enroll in, which are not required as a condition of graduation, must demonstrate the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access must be available to all students in the grade in which a high school credit bearing course is offered and taught. ○ Enrollment must be considered on an individual student basis using an entrance criteria. Enrollment may not be en mass for a grade level. ○ Teachers must be appropriately licensed for the high school credit bearing course. ○ The high school credit bearing course taught in a grade below grade 9 must use the same text, curriculum, and assessments. 	<p>the high school and the same course taught below grade 9 for high school credit. Provide the assessments used for the high school course and the same course being taught below grade 9.</p>		
<p>11. Licensure</p> <p>TL1 The school district employs Jessica Rieper who is not endorsed or</p>	<p>Ms. Rieper must be removed from the Chinese teaching assignment immediately. Ms.Rieper is teaching Chinese to elementary students in the absence of a teaching certificate and/or endorsement to teach Chinese. The district is not allowed to pay the individual. Failure to comply</p>	<p>Submit a signed assurance from the superintendent Ms. Rieper was removed from the assignment of teaching Chinese at Walnut Street School by April 7, 2011, the date the district was officially notified. Provide evidence that as of April 7, 2011 Ms. Rieper was not paid for the teaching</p>		<p>Immediately</p>

Chapter 12 Non-compliance Issues	Feedback	Evidence Needed	Plan of Correction	Timeline for Completion
<p>certified for grade level(s) K-5 (Walnut Street School). 281—IAC 12.4(8)</p> <p>TL1 The school district employs Kevin Klimowski, folder #307288, who is not endorsed or certified to teach government in grades 9-12 or for high school credit for 8th grade students at Harding Middle School. 281—IAC 12.4(8)</p>	<p>may result in an ethics licensure complaint filed with the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners for the administrators and individual involved.</p> <p>Mr. Klimowski must be removed from the U.S. Government teaching assignment immediately. The district is not allowed to pay the individual. Failure to comply may result in an ethics licensure complaint filed with the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners for the teacher and administrators involved.</p>	<p>assignment as of April 7, 2011.</p> <p>Submit a signed assurance from the superintendent Mr. Klimowski was removed from the assignment of teaching U.S. Government to 8th graders at Harding Middle School by April 7, 2011, the date the district was officially notified. Provide evidence that as of April 7, 2011 Mr. Klimowski was not paid for the teaching assignment as of April 7, 2011.</p>		

Areas of Non-Compliance: Outside of Chapter 12

Outside of Chapter 12 Non-compliance Issues	Feedback	Evidence Needed	Plan of Correction	Timeline for Completion
1. SPEDP5 The district has no policy addressing the graduation requirements for eligible individuals 281—IAC 41.12(6)(e)	Policy #645 and accompanying guiding principles in Code 600 omit specificity regarding the graduation requirements for eligible students (i.e., in accordance with the prescribed course of study as described in their individualized education program (IEP)) also noting the district's high school graduation requirements regarding required units in content areas. Please seek a sample policy from IASB or another source.	Submit revised policy 645 along with board meeting minutes highlighting the board's approval of the policy.		August 1, 2011
2. EQD1 The district does not have a policy on non-discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, marital status, sexual orientation, and gender identity (EQD1). Title IX 34CFR 106.9 Section 5	Policy 402.1 and policy 452 omit reference to gender identity as one of the protected classes regarding non-discrimination in employment.	Submit revised policies 402.1 and 452 along with board minutes highlighting the board's approval of the policies.		August 1, 2011

3. EQD2 The district's non-discrimination statement omits reference to all required protected classes. Section 504 34 CFR 104.8, Title IX 34 CFR 106.9, OCR Guidelines IV.O and V.C.	<p>The district newsletter going to all community patrons with the district's non-discrimination statement omitted reference to socioeconomic status (for programs).</p> <p>Please refer to the sample non-discrimination statement at the end of this document</p>	Submit a copy of the non-discrimination statement as placed in the district newsletter.		August 1, 2011
4. EQD3 The district's non-discrimination notification in major written publications: parent, student, employee handbooks, registration handbook, coaches' handbooks, brochures about the district, Web site, and school newsletters omits reference to all required protected categories. Section 504 34 CFR 104.8, Title IX 34 CFR 106.9, OCR Guidelines IV.O and V.C.	<p>Major district publications demonstrated inconsistent use of a non-discrimination statement that includes reference to all protected categories. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One middle school parent handbook was available for review. The statement omitted reference to gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs). • Merrill student handbook omitted reference to socioeconomic status (for programs). • Future Pathways student handbook omitted reference to gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs). • Morris Elementary employee handbook omitted reference to gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs). <p>Please refer to the sample non-discrimination statement at the end of this document.</p>	Provide copies of the identified district publications with the revised non-discrimination statement including all protected classes.		August 1, 2011
5. EQD4 The district's Equal Opportunity in Employment/Affirmative Action plan does not contain all the required	<p>The EEO/AA plan submitted did not include the following required components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative statement • Qualitative analyses • Qualitative goals • Workforce analyses 			August 1, 2011

components. Iowa Code 19B. 11, 281 – IAC Chapter 95	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative analyses Numerical goals 			
<p>6. T4A3 No evidence exists regarding how the district publicly reports progress toward attaining the performance measures for its Safe and Drug Free Schools prevention programming. Title IV-A, NCLBA Sec. 4114(d)(2)(c)</p> <p>T4A4 Evidence of consultation for planning and implementation of SDFSC activities/programs with individuals/groups with demonstrated experience and expertise in drug and violence prevention does not exist. Title IV-A, NCLBA Sec. 4114(c)</p>	The district had Safe and Drug Free Schools Act funding available during the 2010-2011 school year; however, the district has not yet reported progress toward attaining its performance measures for the funding, nor has the district yet provided evidence of consultation for planning and implementing SDFS activities/programs with individuals or groups with demonstrated experience and expertise in drug and violence prevention.	<p>Submit evidence of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public report noting the district's progress toward attaining its performance measures for the funding Consultation for planning and implementing SDFS activities/programs with individuals or groups with demonstrated experience and expertise in drug and violence prevention 		September 15, 2011
7. T2D2 The district has not adopted a definition of technological literacy. Title IID, NCLBA Sec. 2414(b)(1)	The district provided a DE website summary of 21 st Century Skills, one of which is technological literacy.	Provide the district's adopted definition of technological literacy.		August 1, 2011

8. The district is inappropriately using categorical funding for its gifted and talented program. 281 – 98.1 (256, 257), 281 – 98.20 (257)	The Iowa Board of Educational Examiners found the district's inappropriate use of categorical funding for its gifted and talented program though the use of these funds to pay salaries for individual's not directly involved in delivering the G/T program to students. Additionally, site visit documentation and interviews revealed G/T programming is not delivered to each attendance center and identification for the G/T program, for all intents and purposes, is not in place in grades 6-12.	Provide the district's allocation of G/T and required district funding for the G/T program for the 2011-2012 school year.		August 1, 2011 and ongoing annually until the district's next accreditation site visit.
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SAMPLE NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT:

It is the policy of the _____ Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district's Equity Coordinator, Name, Title, Address, Phone Number, E-mail Address